REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claim 1, and added Claims 7-9. Claims 1-9 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 7 are independent claims.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative during the interview held December 4, 2003. The present response summarizes the substance of the interview. During the interview, the handle of the invention was discussed in detail. It was proposed to amend the claims to more specifically recite the limitations of the handle. Arguments were advanced that such an amendment to the claims would serve to define over the applied prior art of record. While no specific agreement was reached as to the patentability of Applicant's invention, the Examiner indicated that full consideration of such a proposed amendment would be given upon filing a formal response.

In the recent Office Action the Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Anderson or Sharp.

Applicant will advance arguments hereinbelow to illustrate the manner in which the presently claimed invention is patentably distinguishable from the cited and applied prior art. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

The Anderson reference discloses a roller bearing sleeve puller including a shank, flattened at one end with a disc shaped knob or hook, a slide sleeve handle, and a nut threadably secured to the other end

of the shank. The knob or hook is placed into engagement with a roller bearing sleeve, and the slide sleeve handle is moved along the shank toward and forcibly hammered the nut. The interaction causes the knob or hook to pull the roller bearing sleeve from its seat. The shank, as disclosed in Anderson does not provide a handle end as recited in Applicant's present claims. As such Anderson is not an anticipatory reference and the rejection relying thereupon should be withdrawn.

The Sharp reference is relied upon for disclosing a prior art device (see Figs. 1 and 2) which illustrates a nail-pulling device having a claw at one end (i.e., at vertical bottom of the Figs.) and a slide hammer handle for forcibly engaging a nut threadably secured to the end opposite the claw. Like Anderson, Sharp does not disclose a handle end as recited in Applicant's claims. As such Sharp is not an anticipatory reference and the rejection relying thereupon should be withdrawn.

Applicant has amended Claim 1 to positively recite the handle end, such that impact collar is disposed between the handle end and the seal engaging end. The seal remover tool allows the user to hold the handle end while sliding the hammer into contact with the impact collar. Applicant respectfully submits that for at least this reason, Claim 1, as amended, along with Claims 2-6, dependent therefrom, and newly presented Claims 7-9 are allowable over the prior art applied of record.
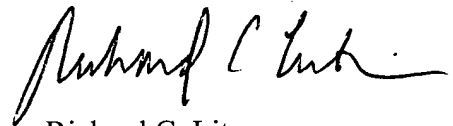
The claims in this application have been revised to more particularly define applicants' unique construction in view of the prior art of record. Reconsideration of the claims in light of the amendments and for the following reasons is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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